

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 1862

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, US

SUBJ: PUBLIC REACTION TO KISSINGER/BITSIOS MEETING

BRUSSELS FOR AMBASSADOR KUBISCH

1. SUMMARY: ATHENS NEWSPAPERS REPORTED PROMINENTLY SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH FONMIN BITSIOS MARCH 7 WITH SPECULATION ON SUBSTANCE OF CONVERSATION DIVIDED BETWEEN CYPRUS PROBLEM AND BILATERAL ISSUES. ANDREAS PAPANDREOU CRITICIZED GREEK GOVERNMENT FOR CONSENTING TO MEETING AND SURPASSED HIS PREVIOUS ATTACKS ON US BY CHARACTERIZING U.S. AS "OUR GREAT ENEMY." END SUMMARY.

2. ATHENS MORNING DAILIES MARCH 7 CONTINUED HEAVY PRESS PLAY ON SECRETARY'S MEETING IN BRUSSELS TODAY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER DIMITRI BITSIOS. AKROPOLIS ANTICIPATED MEETING WOULD BE BENEFICIAL IF SECRETARY CARRIED WITH HIM NEW PROPOSALS ON CYPRUS, WHILE KATHIMERINI SUGGESTED GREEK/US BILATERAL RELATIONS WILL BE REVIEWED INCLUDING
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QUESTION OF AMERICAN BASES IN GREECE. KATHIMERINI ADDED THAT

DURING CYPRUS DISCUSSION FONMIN BITSIOS WILL PUT FORWARD GREEK OPPOSITION ON RESUMPTION OF U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY. TO VIMA SPECULATED THAT SECRETARY WILL SEEK NEW IDEAS FROM GREEK SIDE ON RESUMING INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS WHOSE CONTINUATION CONSTITUTED U.S. GOAL. ELEFTHEROS COSMOS REPORTED THAT BITSIOS WILL DEMAND THE ABOLITION OF U.S. AIRBASE AT ELLINIKON AND THE ELEFSIS HOMEPORTING FACILITY AND THE COMMUNIST NEWSPAPERS SPECULATED SECRETARY WILL SEEK TO SAFEGUARD FUTURE OF U.S. BASES AND PROMOTE NATO INTERESTS. HEADLINES RESPECTIVELY WERE: "WILL THE STATE DEPARTMENT SUBMIT NEW PROPOSALS?", "RELATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND U.S. WILL BE REEXAMINED TODAY IN BRUSSELS BY BITSIOS AND KISSINGER," "RESUMPTION OF CLERIDES/DENKTASH TALKS WILL BE REQUESTED BY KISSINGER," "GREECE WILL REQUEST ABOLITION OF TWO BASES DURING BITSIOS/KISSINGER MEETING," "NEW CYCLE OF PRESSURES BY AMERICANS TO ACCEPT RECONCILIATIONS AND MAKE CONCESSIONS IN CYPRUS AND TO PROTECT STATUS OF BASES."

3. ANDREAS PAPANDREOU, CHAIRMAN OF PASOK, MADE CRITICAL STATEMENT CONCERNING THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH BITSIOS WHICH WAS CARRIED WIDELY IN MORNING NEWSPAPERS. (NOTE: FONMIN BITSIOS CAME UNDER ATTACK FROM PRESS AND PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION LED BY PAPANDREOU LAST MONTH FOR FAILING TO DEFEND GREEK NATIONAL INTERESTS. ALTHOUGH PAPANDREOU CALLED FOR BITSIOS' RESIGNATION, PRIMIN CARAMANLIS IN LATER PARLIAMENTARY DISCUSSION DEFENDED HIM AS AN OUTSTANDING DIPLOMAT.) STATEMENT. QUOTE: THE INFORMATION THAT THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GREECE WILL MEET WITH KISSINGER IN BRUSSELS TO DISCUSS AMONG OTHER THINGS THE CYPRUS QUESTION CREATES GREAT SURPRISE AND DISAPPOINTMENT.

WE HAD HOPED THAT FOLLOWING THE FRUITFUL DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT ON OUR FOREIGN POLICY AND PARTICULARLY ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION AND FOLLOWING ALSO THE DECISION OF THE GOVERNMENT TO CANCEL THE MEETING OF THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS WHICH HAD BEEN SCHEDULED EARLIER, THE GOVERNMENT HAD INDEED FINALLY OPTED IN FAVOR OF INTERNATIONALIZING THE CYPRUS QUESTION.

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SUDDENLY, AND WHILE CERTAIN CONSTRUCTIVE PLANS FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED--SUCH AS THE PROPOSAL OF THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES--WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS, THERE IS ANNOUNCED A MEETING OF THE AUTHOR OF THE TRAGEDY OF CYPRUS, KISSINGER, WITH THE GREEK MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THIS BLASTS ALL THE EFFORTS WHICH ARE BEING

MADE BY MANY SIDES FOR THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE
CYPRUS PROBLEM, WHICH IS GREATLY IN THE INTEREST OF OUR
COUNTRY.

WE ARE AGAIN CEDING TO OUR GREAT ENEMY THE RIGHT
GUIDE OUR COURSE TOWARDS THE PARTITION OF CYPRUS AND OUR
NATIONAL HUMILIATION. THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION IN
CONNECTION WITH THE MEETING IS INADMISSIBLE FOR AN
ADDITIONAL AND SIMPLE REASON THAT ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO
KISSINGER THREATENED TO OVERTHROW CONSTANTINE CARAMANLIS IF
THE LATTER PERSISTED ON HIS STAND REGARDING THE CYPRUS
QUESTION. FOLLOWING SUCH A STATEMENT--WHICH, I INSIST WAS
MADE--THE ONLY MEANING OF THIS MEETING IS SURRENDER. ONCE
AGAIN WE CALL UPON THE GOVERNMENT TO CANCEL THE MEETING.
END QUOTE.
STEARNS

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